In the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawing includes a change to FIG. 3. An Annotated Sheet showing the change is attached along with the Replacement Sheet.

REMARKS

The Abstract is objected to because it contains legal terms and is replete with grammatical errors. In response, Applicant has rewritten the Abstract, and requests withdrawal of the objection on this basis.

Claims 1-2 are objected to because of informalities. More specifically, the term "wheel-radially" and the reference characters are not in parenthesis. In response, Applicant amended claim 1 to include claim 2 and also to replace "wheel-radially" with "radially," as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 1 also has reference characters in parenthesis. For this reason, withdrawal of the objection to claims 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 and 8-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. More specifically, the Examiner considers the word "thereon" as being unclear in line 3 of claim 1. In response, Applicant amended the claim to clarify that "thereon" refers to one of the bead seats. Additionally, the Examiner objects to the "located on the inner" language in the last line of claim 1. In response, Applicant deleted this claim language from claim 1. The Examiner further indicates that "thick" in claims 1-2 is a relative term, which renders the claims indefinite. In response, Applicant amended claim 1 to delete the term "thick" from the claim, and therefore requests withdrawal of the §112 rejection.

Claims 1 and 8-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Atwell, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,350,220). In response, Applicant amended

independent claim 1 to include the features of dependent claim 2, and also clarify that the ring-like element is provided only to the portion of the bead seat located on the radially inward side of the wheel when the wheel is mounted to a vehicle, and respectfully traverse the rejection based on these amendments.

Claim 1 now calls for a cross-section area of the ring-like element to be 0.1 to 4.0 times larger than a cross-section area represented by a product (ExT) in a radial cross-section, where (E) is a sum of a thickness of the rim flange located on the inner side of the vehicle.

As noted by the Examiner under item 13 of the outstanding Office Action, Atwell, Jr. does not specify that the cross-sectional area of the flange 18 is 0.1-0.4 times larger than a cross-sectional area of a thickness of the ring flange plus the width-wise length of the bead seat multiplied by the thickness of the rim adjacent the hump. Nonetheless, this feature is considered to be obvious because one skilled in the art would form the circular flange 18 with a thickness efficient to prevent to the weight 26 from being dislodged during operation. The Examiner is using impermissible hindsight to attempt to find motivation for teaching this feature.

Column 2, lines 28-44 of Atwell, Jr. teach that balance weights 26 are mounted on the flanges 18 and 20 in circumferentially adjusted positions. The balance weights are formed of a bar weight 28 and a clip 30 for releasably attaching the weight 28 to one of the flanges 18, 20. The clip 30 may be made of spring metal and is generally U-shaped, having one end portion 32 embedded in the weight and the other end portion 34

projecting outwardly from the weight. The projecting end portion 34 has an elongated slot 36 and the metal beyond the slot is slit to provide a tang 38 which is bent inwardly and is adapt to degrip one side of the flange 18 or 20 with the weight securely held against the other side of the flange (See FIG. 4A).

Accordingly, the tang 38 of Atwell, Jr. is the defining feature for gripping the flange 18 or 20, and not the thickness of the flange. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one would not be motivated to form a cross-section area of the ring-like element in the range of 0.1 to 4.0 times larger than a cross-section area represented by a product of a thickness of the rim flange located on the innerside of a vehicle when attached thereto and a thickness of a portion of a rim body adjacent to the hump because Atwell, Jr. merely requires that the flange 18 or 20 be capable of being gripped by the tang 38. No significance is provided in Atwell, Jr. for achieving a thickness in the specified range, absent Applicant's teachings.

Additionally, claim 1 calls for the ring-like element to be provided only to the bead seat located on the innerside of the wheel when the wheel is mounted on the vehicle. Atwell, Jr. teaches in FIGs. 3 and 4 to attach weights 26 at both the flange 18 and flange 26. This is different from the present invention, which has a ring-like thick element 26 provided only on the portion of the bead seat 24B' located on the innerside of the wheel when the wheel is mounted on a vehicle (See FIG. 1 of the present application).

Moreover, as discussed in Applicant's specification in paragraph [0023], when the thick element 26 is provided only on the bead seat portion 24B', such a

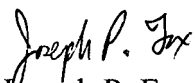
structural arrangement allows the wheel to be lighter relative to a wheel which is not reduced in thickness. Since Atwell, Jr. cannot achieve this advantage and also fails to disclose or suggest the features recited above, withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claims 1 and 8-9 is respectfully requested.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Atwell, Jr. Since this claim is cancelled, the rejection is now moot.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 
Joseph P. Fox
Registration No. 41,760

July 11, 2007
300 South Wacker Drive
Suite 2500
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 360-0080
Customer No. 24978

Fig.3

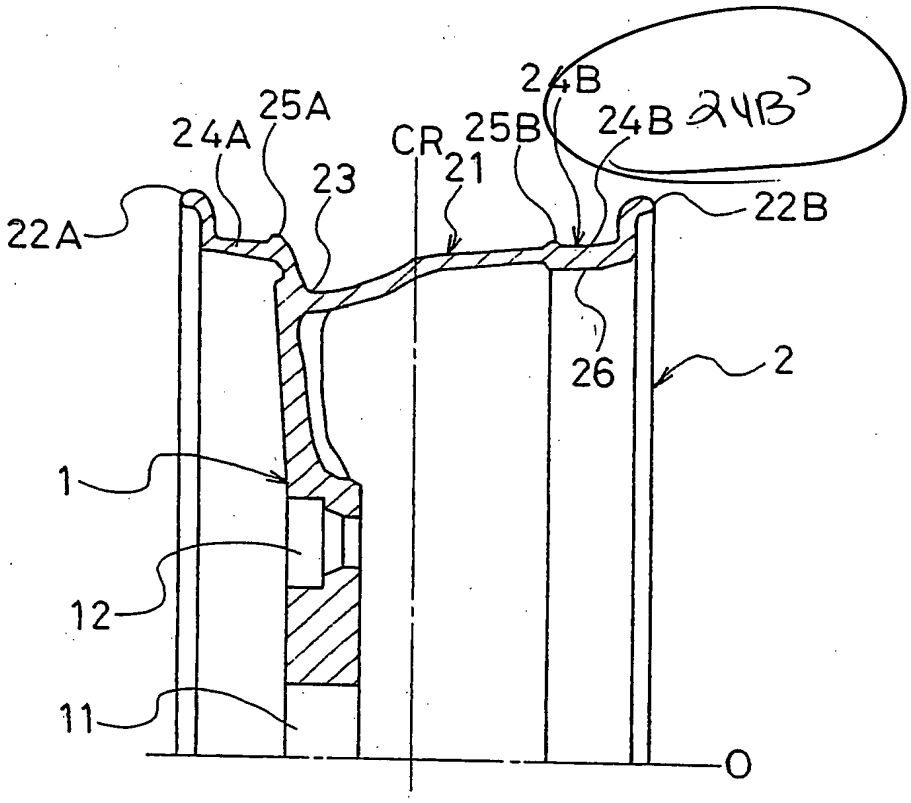


Fig.4